

Masthead Logo

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# Cue or Starting Point: Bird; Bird; Tree; Cloud; Tree; Bird; Bird; Cloud

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*Kathleen Fraser*

## CUE OR STARTING POINT

## BIRD

Sometimes they fly in pairs                      about the length of one  
window

Sometimes they are ponderous as big blades and  
windowshades over grass

brown paper is to brown field algebraic as if one

but not the other one gives up  
being alike                      pointing at something obvious

## BIRD

*t d k* and *s* often carry us  
emerge outside of  
ending us  
as swallows rush

and Vespas tear over long plastic strips  
of blue and yellow  
binding  
brake and

break free of us  
birds know the length of us even from behind  
a window and look down

in that  
brown black sketchbook ordering  
wing      wind how made



## TREE

“the thing about trees is . . . . . relentlessly  
consistent” antennae

untenable metal staple  
yet flies down silvery night each length of bee wing

rung after rung, dark’s light  
it perched on pieces of blue cloth

## CLOUD

Arm in arm, across tarmac pointing her to

thin coral cloud stream (pious in  
reproduction)

above piazza’s ancient fruit tints (tropical flush in  
some other island context)

“I think it means rain” (wrong, again)

late March, knowing she needed to see this emptiness  
clouds and the one tree (which didn’t leaf out) gone

## TREE

one did hear the flow of nearby branches  
shear occasional and limp

yet this rawness moves, is  
moving  
even sudden atrophy of limb

## BIRD

see an emptiness shoot off  
lengths  
dependent on scale  
could  
eat at you, that movement  
narrow path stapled with wing  
your underestimation of how it  
(left behind itself)

## BIRD

|                    |       |                        |
|--------------------|-------|------------------------|
| not a protective   | thing | but the negative       |
| incision not brown | field | of scissor             |
| cut                | wing  | right up<br>against it |

looked downward & saw one long wing pointing & another up

|                                 |                        |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| to remove it                    |                        |
| paint between sound             | scratchy big stillness |
| of birds                        |                        |
| and other inward <i>fl</i> tter | still did not move     |

## CLOUD

My hands had to move as fast as the Vespa over tarmac

|  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| Clouds drew themselves                   | No it was some orftring    |
| principle pulling or pushing             | No it was the sketchbook's |
| empty page and the little box of staples |                            |

Something shining outside the black line  
not finished

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*for Sanda Iliescu, after her drawings/notation, Rome, May/1995*